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NOTES ON GEOGRAPHICAL EDUCATION.

BY

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PHYSIOGRAPHY AS A COLLEGE ENTRANCE SUBJECT.—The science of physiography, or, as it perhaps may better be called, physical geography, will undoubtedly be greatly strengthened in its position in the near future through its being made an optional entrance subject in certain of our leading universities. The effect of this action will be not only to give physiography a position as dignified as that of physics or chemistry, but to encourage the teaching of the subject in all the better secondary and college preparatory schools of the country. This step further testifies to the fact that this somewhat composite science is as capable of giving efficient mental discipline and scientific training as the other sciences that have so long held their position, practically unchallenged, in the secondary schools. Harvard and Columbia Universities have both raised this subject to the rank of a college entrance option. In the case of Harvard, physiography may count one point of the required minimum of two points in science out of the total twenty-six points which a candidate must pass for admission, according to the new method. The subject may be offered also under practically the same conditions as an option for entrance into the Lawrence Scientific School, of Harvard University.

In the case of Columbia, however, the subject takes perhaps a still more important position, inasmuch as it may count for one point out of fifteen required points, of which not more than two can be in elementary science.

Inasmuch as in both these instances the requirement is much higher than can be attained by a pupil pursuing the subject in the first or second year of his secondary course, this means the inclusion of an elective in physiography in the later years of the courses of all those schools that desire to fit their pupils in all subjects for these universities. It is hoped that in the course of time the influence of secondary schools will have been so extended downward that geography teaching in the elementary school will have reached such a standard that pupils will not have to wait until their high school

course for an insight into the physical features of the earth, causally considered. Under the existing conditions, the consensus of opinion is that physical geography must occur in the first or second year of the secondary school course, and the latest and best recommendations of experts emphasize this point very strongly.

SUMMER SCHOOLS IN PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY.—The demand of progressive teachers for summer opportunities for studying rational geography points, perhaps more strongly than any other fact, to the slow improvement of geography teaching that is coming about in the elementary schools, in answer to the continued endeavors of leaders in the subject during the last ten years. Practically every summer school or institute of any strength or size includes at the present time in its curriculum courses of greater or less length and completeness in geography.

It is in the leading universities, however, that the subject of geography receives the most concentrated and scientific attention, and progressive teachers can find the most serious help along the line of modern geography during their summer vacation. The University of Chicago, Columbia University, Cornell University and Harvard University will, during the coming summer, offer rich opportunities to teachers who desire to study special phases of geography. It should be noted, however, that in the University of Chicago the courses to be given are not a part of a special summer school, arranged for the needs of teachers, but the regular work of the summer quarter of the university, to which teachers are eligible. As a matter of fact, however, the courses in the other institutions noted are as nearly as possible the equivalents of certain parts of regular term courses. Possibilities for teachers are perhaps indicated by the following lists of courses given at the different universities. At the University of Chicago we find announced courses running for six weeks, five times a week, in elementary meteorology; oceanography; physiography of land surfaces, with a special reference to the United States, and the physical evolution of the North American continent—an outline course for teachers of geology and geography. At Cornell University there are six-week courses in the geography of North America three times a week, and in physiography five times a week, these courses being especially arranged for teachers. At Harvard University a course is announced in geography running for six weeks, five days a week, and devoted largely to the study of land forms, meteorology, and oceanography. At Columbia University, two courses are announced, five weeks,

six days a week—one in general geography and one in scientific physiography. In each of the universities the courses will be given with the full material equipment of the departments, and the effect on the two or three hundred students who will probably be attracted by the courses ought to be very great. Already the summer work of our universities along these lines has exerted a great influence upon the teaching of school geography, and it will not be many years before a large number of the teachers in our elementary schools will have been deeply influenced through such university work. It is to be hoped that other colleges and universities may feel the demands of the times and establish strong departments in geography in the near future.